BAPTISM

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A Discussion of the Words

"Buried with Christ in Baptism"

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CINCINNATI: JENNINGS & PYE
NEW YORK: EATON & MAINS

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THE WESTERN METHODIST BOOK CONCERN.

PREFACE.

FREQUENT inquiries have come to me, as a teacher of the Greek Testament, for an explanation of the word "*baptism*," and for some exegesis of certain passages of the New Testament in which this word is found. The most noted of these passages are the ones in the sixth chapter of Romans, and the second chapter of Colossians, containing the words, "Buried with Christ in Baptism." I think that I may serve the cause of truth, *as I understand it*, by a discussion of these passages.

My class work has led me to touch only on the philological and the exegetical phases of this subject. And it answers my present purpose to discuss these passages in these

two aspects. If this discussion is conclusive, other questions cease to have much importance.

The philological investigation of the word *baptize*, in Part I, follows the old trend, though it is not a copy of the old books. The exegesis of the word *buried*, in Part II, is newer. It is not always in the words of the fathers; but I hope it may meet the approval of the sons. I believe it is in accord with the teachings of the Master, and of his great apostle; it magnifies and glorifies the gospel of Christ; and (which is of much less moment) it is "orthodox."

I oppose what seems to me to be erroneous; yet I hope that those who differ from the views here presented may read the discussion without offense, if not with conviction. Are we not all of one body, *and one spirit*, of one Lord, one faith, *one baptism?*

DELAWARE, OHIO,
February 25, 1901.

BURIED WITH CHRIST IN BAPTISM.

THESE words are found twice in the Authorized Translation of Paul's Epistles; as follows:

Romans vi:—"3. Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4. Therefore we are *buried with him by baptism* into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."

Colossians ii:—"8. Beware lest any man

spoil you. . . . Ye are complete in him. . . . 11. in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by the circumcision of Christ: 12. *buried with him in baptism*, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith."

Favorite words with immersionists.

These words of the old translation, "buried with him in baptism," wrested from their grammatical and logical connection, and so from their true meaning, are favorite words with immersionist Churches. They are inscribed on their baptisteries; are recited with unction in the administration of the initiatory sacrament; and are always quoted by immersionists with peculiar satisfaction as conclusive in the debate on the form of the baptismal rite. I think that the mass of the people in these denominations, and even their professed scholars, understand these words as meaning "immersed with Christ in water;" and they are not very patient with the obtuseness, or the willfulness,

that keeps the rest of Christendom from acceding to this interpretation. Their first peremptory condition of fellowship with us is, that we "meet them at the baptistery."

I propose to inquire into the Scriptural basis of this interpretation: I shall try to ascertain the meaning of the two leading words, severally, in this phrase, "Buried in Baptism;" and thus to develop the apostle's thought in the sentences in which they stand.

What, then, is the apostle's meaning in these passages? From the twice-expressed words, "Buried with him by [or, in] baptism," the commentators have generally assumed that the apostle thought of baptism as an immersion with Christ; and they fancy that this view is confirmed further by the apostle's figure in the fifth verse: "We have been planted together in the likeness of his death." But in this last verse, the apostle's own words in the Greek can not bear such a meaning. In the Revised, the translation

of the verb is changed for the better, though that of the preposition for the worse: "We have *become united with him* by the likeness of his death." Yet, though the Revisers abandon the figure of *being planted with him*, they seem still, by retaining the word "likeness," to be blindly groping after an imaginary resemblance in the form of our baptism to the burial of the Lord, as if this burial were a burial in water. Both translations, the Authorized and the Revised, are erroneous; the sense is not only far-fetched, it is absolutely incomprehensible. But when we recall the apostle's words to their proper meaning, and translate the passage without the bias of immersionist preconceptions, we reach, in the language thus found, a logical coherence, a nobleness of meaning, a self-evidencing consistency, that brings it into glorious harmony with the gospel of grace to all the world.

The following translation correctly reproduces the meaning of both passages:

Romans vi:—"3. Do you not know that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4. We were buried [laid in the grave], therefore, with him, through the [rite of] baptism into his [vicarious] death; that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in renewal [a fresh grant] of life. 5. For if we have become united with him in the sameness with his death, we shall be united with him in the sameness also with his resurrection."

Correct translation.

Colossians ii:—"8. Beware lest any [adherent of circumcision] rob you [of your faith in Christ]. 10. Because in him [not in Moses], ye are complete [needing nothing from Judaism], . . . 11. in whom also ye were circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands [that is, physical], with the circumcision of Christ [in the heart], 12. having been buried [laid in the grave] with him, in your baptism; in which [rite

of baptism] also ye were raised with him through the faith."

I accompany this translation with a few brief exegetical notes, to justify the changes here made. Some of these points will be quite fully developed and established in the subsequent discussion.

1. The word "buried" does not mean immersed, but, simply, laid in the grave in which Christ was laid.

2. "Baptism" does not mean the water, or the baptistery, in which the immersionists hold that we were buried, but, simply, the rite or sacrament, *through* (or *in*) virtue of which we were constructively buried with Christ.

3. The phrase "through the baptism," does not express the agent or instrumentality, by which we were buried, but signifies only the mode of our union with Christ, *the rite*, "*through* virtue of which" or "by the right of which," we were conceptually buried with him.

4. The word "glory" is a Hebraism for power. While the word power does not *translate* the Greek word, it expresses the meaning of the passage. See 2 Cor. xiii, 4.

5. "Walk" means "to go our way," "to continue our career," "to have our life extended to us on new terms."

6. "Renewal," does not express a *moral* change, a regeneration of our being, but a legal reinvestiture with the life which was once forfeited.

7. The Greek word which the old translations give as "likeness," means *sameness;* that is "*such* a death *as* his." The word "likeness" gives no appropriate or even intelligible sense to the passages in which it is found. But the verse becomes both appropriate and intelligible if it reads: "We have become united with him in the *sameness* with his death, and shall be united with him in the *sameness* with his resurrection." We died the *same* death as Christ, and arose with the *same* resurrection. This word

makes the needed sense also in the other places where Paul uses it. For example: "Death reigned even over those who sinned not after the *sameness* with Adam's transgression." (Rom. v, 14.) The apostle's thought here is, that though man sinned *like* Adam, it was not with the *same* specific sin. Again, "God sent his Son in the *sameness* with sinful flesh, and for sin." (Rom. viii, 3.) That is, Christ became *man*, "of his flesh and bones;" not as a later heresy, Docetism, taught, a phantom, in the *likeness* of man.

Immersionist interpretation.

Nevertheless the apostle's words "We were buried with him," seem to the immersionists to be significant of the form of baptism, by themselves alone, without the help of the fifth verse; and to express beyond doubt that baptism was by immersion. Nor do those who favor this interpretation lack a large and imposing array of great names for this view. If such a point as this could be set-

tled by weight of authority outside of the Bible, it might seem that this debate is closed. Almost all the great exegetes, from the days of Chrysostom down, have declared that the word "buried" here shows, "*by allusion*," that, in Paul's conception, baptism was by immersion. I quote some of these opinions to show the general drift of interpretation among these commentators; many of whom, however, are far from conceding that immersion is obligatory on the Church. In giving these quotations, I do not here pause to attempt a refutation of the views expressed, nor to animadvert upon the silliness of some of the sayings; as, for instance, those of Tillotson, Chalmers, and Clarke.

Archbishop Tillotson (*Episcopalian*): "Anciently those who were baptized were immersed and buried in the water to represent their death to sin; and then did rise up out of the water to signify their entrance upon a new life. And to these customs the apostle here alludes."

Doddridge (*Dissenter*): "It seems the part of candor to confess that here is an allusion to the manner of baptism by immersion."

Wesley (*Methodist*): "Alluding to the ancient manner of baptism by immersion."

Chalmers (*Scottish Free Church*): "The prevalent style of administration in the apostle's days was by an actual submersion of the whole body under water. Jesus Christ underwent this sort of baptism by an mmersion under the surface of the ground, whence he soon emerged again by his resurrection. We, by being baptized into his death, are conceived to have made a similar translation: in the act of descending under the water of baptism, to have resigned the old life; and in the act of ascending, to emerge into a second or new life."

Adam Clarke (*British Wesleyan*): "It is probable that the apostle here alludes to the mode of administering baptism by immersion; the whole body being put under

the water, which seemed to say, The man is drowned, is dead; and when he came up out of the water, he seemed to have a resurrection to life: The man is risen again, he is alive."

Conybeare and Howson (*Episcopalian*): "This passage can not be understood unless it be borne in mind that the primitive baptism was by immersion."

Barnes (*Presbyterian*): "It is altogether probable that the apostle in this place had allusion to the custom of baptizing by immersion."

Beet (*British Wesleyan*): "Immersion was the usual form of baptism. And we can not doubt that to this Paul refers. Even the form of admission to the Church sets forth a spiritual burial and resurrection."

Conant (*Baptist*): "The language is so explicit, and the reference is so obvious, that all Christian antiquity understood by it an allusion to the symbolic significance of the

rite of immersion. Almost all modern scholars are of the same opinion. The few attempts to set aside this obvious view have made little impression, and require no refutation."

It seems presumptuous (especially in the face of the last curt remark) to dissent from these grave and venerable authorities, to which many more of the same tenor could be added. Yet great names, and many of them, have no intrinsic weight in argument. They merely show the drift of opinion, often begotten of prejudice, and often, as in this interpretation, of mere ignorance. And notwithstanding this array of great and sober authorities to the contrary, I venture to say, and I say it deliberately and with all confidence in the conclusion which I have here reached, that Paul neither says nor implies anything of the kind that they attribute to him. I hope and believe that I shall be able to carry my readers with me in spite

Correct opinion.

of these authorities, whose unsupported opinions are yet of no authority whatever against the demonstrable meaning of Paul's words and Paul's thoughts. There is in the apostle's words here no allusion whatever to immersion as the apostolic mode of baptism. The sense of the passage as a whole, as well as of the several words, does not hinge in the slightest degree on the mode of baptism, scarcely on the fact of a baptism. I am sure, were we to drop all the apostle's verbal reference to baptism, we should lose little from the outer substance, and nothing at all from the evangelical meaning and teaching, of this passage. It is easy to see why Paul should mention baptism. Baptism was the standing rite in the Church significant of initiation into Christ; and so a mention of it came into good play in his marvelous account of our oneness with Christ. But he could have uttered all his thought in this direction, without naming the baptism: "Do ye not know that all we who have

become members of Christ's body, shared in his vicarious death? We were buried [laid in the grave], therefore, with him, through our sharing in his death." And thus the words of the text are applicable and explicable, not to the teaching of immersion, but in the line of an entirely different and very much grander theme and thought.

We now proceed with the discussion, first, of the word *Baptize;* and, second, of the word *Buried.*

PART I.

BAPTIZE.

THE interpreters, who, like the authorities just quoted, declare that the primitive Christian baptism was by immersion, have invented their facts. They invented the facts to suit their erroneous explanation of the word *buried*. The usage of the Apostolic Church was precisely the same as that of the Jews for centuries before the Christian era, the same as that of the larger part of the Christian Church for all the centuries since, and the same as that of the Pedo-baptist Churches in the present century: any ritual application of water met all the requirements of the case. We may concede that Apostolic baptism was possibly administered some-

Meaning of "Baptize."

times by immersion, though this is in doubt; yet certainly it was also administered by sprinkling, or pouring, and this is not in doubt. The cumulative evidence for this conclusion, from Scripture and from history, long ago amounted to almost a demonstration. But if not thus settled before, the recent "find" of "The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles" puts it now beyond gainsaying. This book which was recovered at Constantinople, in 1884, dates certainly as early as the year 120; and some critics think that it is even earlier than the year 90, the earliest date of the Gospel by St. John. In chapter vii, of "The Teaching," it says: "Baptize into the name [profession] of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, in living water [that is running water: compare John iv, 10]. But if thou have not living water, [going] unto other water [a standing pool], baptize; but if thou canst not in cold [water], then in warm. But if thou

Apostolic Baptism.

have neither [of these out-of-door opportunities], *pour water upon the head thrice*, into the name of Father and Son and Holy Spirit." The baptism here enjoined, in the first two alternatives, of "living water," or of "other water," is not to be explained on the assumption that it was done by immersion, but that, like the baptism of the Jews, and of the Baptist, and of the apostles, it was done in the open air, in natural supplies of pure water. In Palestine, such natural opportunities were not everywhere accessible for this purpose. The third alternative of *pouring* water upon the head, from the hand or from a vessel, was then offered for their wants; and this baptism, too, was probably in the open air. But baptism by *pouring* may equally have been the usage by the side of the running brook, or the standing pool. For example, in Christ's own town of Nazareth, there was no supply of water for immersion, and there was none at Sychar, in Samaria, near to

Jacob's well. The circumstances make it probable that Philip baptized the eunuch from a pool by the side of the way, where certainly there is *now* no running water;* and Peter baptized Cornelius in the house, with "the water" † brought in a cup for the occasion.

The testimony of this book is absolutely conclusive to this as a common, if not the invariable, apostolical usage. Yet undoubtedly, not long afterwards in the history of the Church, literal immersion was practiced, if it did not, for a while, displace the earlier

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*And at that season (April, after the Passover, Acts viii, 27), the rains had ceased, and the country was dry, except for occasional pools. It was one such chance pool that suggested to the eunuch the opportunity for baptism. The literal translation implies that the water was found by accident, and that it could not have been sufficient for an immersion. "As they were going along the road ["this is desert;"] they came to *some water;* and the eunuch [as if surprised] said, *Look, water!* what hinders me from being baptized?" (Acts viii, 36.)

†"Can any one forbid *the water*, that these should be baptized, who received the Holy Spirit, as also we?" (Acts x, 47.)

and simpler rite of pouring or sprinkling. But this change in form, which did not in the least change the nature or the significance of the initiatory rite, can be accounted for by the tendency among unspiritual men to exaggerate and exalt the external and incidental features of the rite into essential and obligatory matters. The Greek Church has retained this extravagant mode of administration, along with many other mummeries: the Catholic Church soon returned to the simple form of baptizing by pouring or sprinkling; though it also has added to the simplicity of the apostolical rite many fantastic mummeries of a ritualistic character.

History of the word "Baptize."

I think that the facts in regard to the meaning and the history and the Scriptural usage of the word *baptism* can be made clear to the understanding and the convictions of men. It has often been asserted, with all the confidence, even with the effrontery, of ignorance, that the word baptism is, and has

always been, *univocal;* that is, that the word had, and has, but one meaning; that, in the classic Greek in which it was first used, this word had the very specific modal meaning of immersion; and that this meaning, alone, was continued in the Greek Testament. If this be so, then beyond debate, the ancient mode of administering this Christian rite was by immersion. Though, even then, it does not follow that *we* should *therefore* practice the same mode now. Such is the judgment of many learned authorities whom we have quoted above. They concede (erroneously, however,) that once baptism was by immersion; but they do not hold that it is therefore obligatory now upon the Church. Circumstances of place, or social proprieties, or of Christian liberty, may justify a change (though not, as the Quakers think, an abolishment), in a matter of ecclesiastical ceremony which does not touch the essentials of the faith. Such a change has certainly occurred in the

minutiæ of the celebration of the Lord's Supper; and possibly such a change in the minutiæ of this sacrament of baptism would not be an offense to make the angels weep, and would not cry to heaven for condemnation, or even for exclusion from the Lord's table. But in fact no change has taken place in the form of administration of Christian baptism. The Church *began with sprinkling;* and then lapsed for a time into the gross ritualism of immersion; but now has come back to the ancient and simple form in which the apostles baptized their converts.

The history of the Greek verb *baptize*, or the noun *baptism*, is as well known as that of any other word in either the Greek or the English language. The Biblical critics, but especially Doctor Conant, a distinguished Baptist scholar, have found 168 instances of this word *baptize* in the Greek classics, and very many instances in the early Greek ecclesiastical writers.

Classic use of "Baptize."

And there are 80 instances of the word in the Greek Testament. The examples from the classics clearly establish the sense, or senses, of the word in Greek literature; and the examples in the New Testament just as clearly establish the meaning, but a very different meaning of the word, in Christian literature. In 86 of the classic examples (we accept Doctor Conant's showing as approximately correct), the word means *to immerse* physically; that is, to put the object under the element, the fluid remaining stationary, and the object being moved, or brought into it; and in 82 examples the word means to *overwhelm* the object, that is to pour the element over it, the object remaining stationary, and the fluid being moved to it, or poured over it. These examples show that the Greek word was not, as so often asserted, univocal, expressive of one particular mode of action, but that it had two distinct meanings, expressive of two distinct modes of physical action. But,

besides these expressions of definite physical action, the word was sometimes used metaphorically, when there was no actual physical action. These meanings are not very far apart; yet they are distinct. The word was not univocal in classic literature; but above all, it did not come into use in the Greek Testament, in either of the modal senses of the classic word expressive of a physical immersion, or of a submersion, but as a ritual or sacramental term, without expressing any definite physical action, and with a very different content.

We may safely accept the showing given by classic scholars in regard to the classic meaning of the word. It meant physical immersion or submersion; and though sometimes used metaphorically, it was never used by the classic writers in a ritual sense. This is altogether a later Jewish and New Testament usage. The claim sometimes put forth by ill-informed theologians, and found in certain antiquated lexicons of the Greek

language, that in the classics, the word "baptize" sometimes meant *sprinkle*, or anything else than immerse, is erroneous, and misleading in the search after the truth. No such example has been found. And even in New Testament Greek, also, the word never, of itself, means *sprinkle;* but on the other hand it does not mean *immerse.*

New Testament use of the word.

In the New Testament, it is not a word of mode, as it was in the classics; but of rite. Our contention is that the word baptize, once exclusively modal, with the specific sense of immerse (or of submerse), has lost in the New Testament all modal significance, and expresses only a ritual, or ceremonial, application of water—a ritual application, which may be administered in any form whatever, by immersion, or pouring, or sprinkling; but which, among the Jews, long before the time of Christ, was always administered *by sprinkling;* and this usage was continued by the Baptist and by the apostles. But it is

false philology and false exegesis to hold that the word can be translated "*sprinkle*" or "*pour*."

Here is the verbal fallacy with which the immersionists deceive themselves, and sometimes deceive others. They hold, correctly, that the word baptize in the classics meant immerse (or submerse); and they think that they are therefore justified in explaining the word in the New Testament by the word "immerse," and then in introducing this word in English translations of the New Testament. But the conclusion is illicit. And there is a converse fallacy on the other side. Because most exegetes believe (correctly) that the word baptize has acquired a ritual significance, and that the rite thus denoted can be properly administered by the act of sprinkling, some of them seem to think that the word can therefore be *explained* by the word sprinkle, and that this word can be used to *translate* the Greek word. This conclusion,

Fallacies.

too, is illicit. And the proper way to deal with such words, especially with words whose meaning is still in debate among the Churches, is to retain the words verbally, not translating them at all by other words, but explaining them. So, with this word in particular. Since there can be no common agreement in the Churches upon the word "*immerse*" as a proposed translation, and none upon the word "*sprinkle*," all parties should adhere to the word "*baptize.*" Yet when we come to *explain* baptism, we should contend that it is a *ritual* act, and signifies, not immersion, not pouring, not sprinkling, but *initiation*, or consecration, into Christ. But though "*initiation*" expresses the ritual import of the act, and should be used in *explaining* it, we should not thrust even this word as a translation upon the word in the New Testament, or in theology, so as to substitute the one term for the other. And so we should hold that by whatever form we bap-

tize the candidate, whether by immersion, or pouring, or sprinkling (and the last preferably to the first), we ritually accomplish the end of baptism, which is to signify initiation into Christ.

But immersionist scholars claim that the word baptize, as used in the New Testament, retained its classic value; or rather, they think that it kept only one of the two modal senses which it had in the classic Greek, the one specific sense of physical immersion, when the fluid remains stationary, and the object (or the person to be baptized) is moved or put under it. In their claim, this physical immersion is the essential point. They hold that the word means that, and nothing but that; and that the emersion from the water, after the immersion, is no part of the meaning of the word, but only a reasonable inference in the nature of the case. Now this literal modal sense of a physical immersion might possibly suit in some of the passages

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in the New Testament; but it does not suit in the passages before us, from the sixth chapter of Romans and the second chapter of Colossians. The only possible exegesis of these passages rules out any modal sense whatever. And if this sense is surely ruled out in these instances, it must, consistently with the immersionist claim of uniformity, be ruled out in every other place in the New Testament. The fallacy of the immersionist consists, as we have seen, in assuming that because the *word baptize* remains verbally the same as it was in the classic Greek, the *sense* also remains the same. But nothing is more common than changes in the sense of words when the words, remaining verbally the same, are brought into new connections. This is shown by the different meanings, sometimes very unlike meanings, given in the dictionaries to almost every leading word either in the Greek or in the English language. This New Testa-

Change in meaning of Baptize.

ment word *baptize* doubtless remains identically the same as it was in the classic Greek; but its meaning in its new associations in the New Testament does not remain the same.

This word is not a solitary or peculiar exception. There are many words in the New Testament which did not bring with them into the Scriptures and into the Christian vocabulary the meanings which they had in the classics. Certainly Christ and Paul and John did not attach the same sense as the classic writers, to the classic Greek words which they used for sin, grace, holiness, faith, salvation; for atonement, redemption, justification resurrection; and to scores of other classic words that have become New Testament words. Christian readers understand these words in a sense that would have puzzled Plato, or even Plutarch, a contemporary of the apostles. Such is the fact in regard to the word

Similar changes in other words.

"baptize." This word, though keeping its verbal identity, has undergone a complete change of meaning. In classic Greek it had one meaning, that of *immersion*, already described; in New Testament Greek it has another and very unlike meaning, that of a ritual *initiation*, by whatever application of water. And it has this last meaning, and this alone, in all its present ecclesiastic or ceremonial associations.

But baptism is not the *only* modal word, which, in the Biblical usage, has dropped its *modal* value, and has acquired a *ritual* value. The word for "circumcision," whether in Hebrew, Greek, or Latin, has had a development of meaning almost precisely parallel with that of baptism. Expressive at first of a literal modal act, the mere physical "mangling of the flesh," with, so far, no further meaning, and with no religious significance, it became (possibly even earlier than the Mosaic law) consecrated to a specific ritual

Other ritual words.

usage, having, among the Jews, a ceremonial sense almost that of a sacrament. And then in its final acceptation, in Paul's frequent use of the word, its original literal sense of "cutting the flesh" completely faded out, and the word became, like baptism, a term expressive in general of consecration to the Lord. It is thus that Paul can say: "That is not circumcision which is outward in flesh: [though this was once its only meaning], but that is circumcision which is of the heart" (Romans ii, 28); and, again, "We [the Gentiles, uncircumcised men] are the circumcision, who worship in Spirit, and do not trust in flesh" (Philippians iii, 3); and, again, in one of the passages which we have before us in this discussion, "Ye [Gentiles] were circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands [that is, physical, in the flesh], in the circumcision of Christ" (Colossians ii, 11).

"*Sprinkle*" is another word that has had exactly the same development from a phys-

ical sense into a ritual sense. From its specific modal meaning, it has acquired the significance of a ritual purification and of consecration to God. The range of this word is much more restricted than that of *baptism;* but one passage is absolutely conclusive as to its ritual sense, or at least a figurative application of the ritual sense. Among the Jews, the priest was wont to sprinkle the congregation with water, and sometimes with blood, as a ritual token of purification. In allusion to this Jewish usage, which was literal and physical, the writer of Hebrews says, "Let us draw near to the holy place, . . . having our hearts *sprinkled* [that is, washed, purified] from an evil conscience." (Hebrews x, 22.)

In this word *baptize*, we have an interesting and instructive instance of the change in meaning above described. Under the Mosaic law, the Jews, if ceremonially defiled, were commanded to wash themselves and their clothing, as symbols of purifica-

tion. In the case of Gentile proselytes from heathenism, the Jews first circumcised them as a sign of consecration to God, and then administered ceremonial washing, to signify internal purifiation. This symbolical washing when publicly administered by an officiator was always sprinkling. We do not read that any priest ever *immersed* any Jewish member of the congregation, or *any proselyte;* but we often read that the priest sprinkled them with water, or with blood, to indicate the ritual purification. Ritual bathing by the Jew, for ritual uncleanness, was a private act of the unclean man; and needed no intervention of priest, or sprinkling hyssop. It was left to the exaggerated ritualism of the post-apostolic Church of Christ to violate the decencies of religious service by an actual, tactual, pressure by the priest of the nude persons of candidates, men *and women*, in the act of immersion.

But in the case of the public and official initiation and consecration of a proselyte,

the service of the priest (or perhaps of any Jew: *Paul* circumcised Timothy), was needed to circumcise him and to sprinkle the water of purification. The Hebrew language had a word "tabal," of which the primary meaning was *moisten, stain.* Thus "Joseph's brethren stained, defiled his coat, in blood." (Gen. xxxvii, 31.) The Septuagint word here is ἐμόλυναν, "*emolunan.*" But the word *tabal* was mostly used for *dip.* Thus: "A clean person shall *dip* the hyssop in water, and sprinkle it upon the unclean." (Num. xix, 18.) The Septuagint word here is βάψει, "*bapsei.*" Again: "Naaman dipped himself seven times in the Jordan." (2 Kings v, 14.) The Septuagint word here is ἐβαπτίζετο, "*ebaptizeto.*" And this last is the Greek word which took the place of the Hebrew, among the Jews; but with a modified meaning. It was thus early not a word of *mode,* but of *rite.* After Alexander the Great conquered Asia, in B. C. 330, the Greek language became largely employed

by the Jews; and the Greek word *baptize* was used, not as meaning a physical immersion, but with large latitude of mode, as a ceremonial purification, which, in accordance with Jewish antecedents, was *sprinkling*. And that this word was thus used by the Jews, during the Greek period, is shown by the instances of its use in the Greek apocryphal writings of the Jews. Thus it is said that Judith, when a visitant in the camp of Holofernes, and exposed to ritual pollution, "went forth by night into the ravine of Bethulia, and baptized herself [purified herself ritually] by the spring of water." (Judith xii, 7; B. C. 150.) For ordinary *washing* Judith doubtless had water in her tent; but she nightly went out of the heathen camp, that she might purify herself ritually, in living water in the open air. (Compare the quotation, p. 20, from "The Teaching of the Twelve.") This ceremony was probably performed by the

Jewish usage of the word Baptize.

act of sprinkling. The Greek preposition is "*by*, or *at the side*, of the spring," not *in* it. Besides, even if the spring was large enough for immersion, it is not probable that Judith would immerse herself in it, either naked, or in her garments. In like manner, the son of Sirach says, "He that baptizes himself from [the pollution of] a dead body, and touches it again, . . . what did he profit with his washing?" (Ecclesiasticus xxxiv, 27; B. C. 140.) The writer here uses two general words, *baptize* and *wash*, as equivalent terms to express this ceremonial purification from a dead body. But Moses commands that this purification be done by *sprinkling* (which is a third specific term used ritually for the same act): "Whosoever touches a dead body, . . . if the water for uncleanness has not been *sprinkled* upon him, he shall be unclean." (Numbers xix, 13.)

Thus the Greek word baptize, which in secular connections kept its old specific,

modal sense of *immerse*, gradually in Jewish usage lost all significance as a modal word, and acquired a special range as a purely ritual term; in which, from the days of the Maccabees, during the last centuries of Jewish history, and during all these Christian centuries, the mode was no more signified than it is signified by the current use of the ritual word baptize now. For two thousand years and more, the word has merely expressed initiation into a new state or relation. The word does not denote, or connote, the particular mode of the rite. Any ritual application of the water, in whatever mode applied (but preferably in the Jewish ceremonial, by sprinkling), was Jewish baptism; as it was said: "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye will be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols I will cleanse you." (Ezek. xxxvi, 25.)

And this word of the Jews was adopted by the Baptist to express initiation into repentance; and was continued by Christ to ex-

press the prescribed ceremonial or symbolic rite for initiation into the Christian Church.

Word adopted by John and Christ.

The word did not express to John the Baptist, and did not express to Christ and his followers, a mere physical immersion of the body of the believer into water; but a ritual consecration of the man, body and soul, and an initiation into the new faith which he has accepted. This, and this only, is Christian baptism.

Such are the facts in regard to the change of meaning of this word, from the original literal, modal sense into the ritual application. That a change has actually taken place in the sense of the word baptism since the classic usage, is evident and indisputable. All persons, without exception, even the immersionists, admit and affirm that the word in its present use in English, has undergone this change in its meaning,—that it does *not* now express physical immersion as it did

Change of meaning: when?

in the classic Greek, but has become a term of ritual import. The only dispute is as to the date and history of this change. The account given above shows the real facts in the case. The change is as old as the days of the Jews, centuries before Christ. But the immersionists affirm that this change in the meaning of the word *baptize* never attached to it in the Greek Testament; that it does not appear at all in the early Christian literature; that it is a modern ecclesiastical perversion; and is a change in the English word only. Baptist authorities say that this change in the meaning of the word took place as late as in the time of Queen Elizabeth, A. D. 1558, the final date of Protestantism in England. If so, the change must have been very sudden; for after the date of Elizabeth, and before the date of the Puritan commonwealth in 1643, the ritual sense of the word had become fully established and currently accepted. Less than a century is a surprisingly brief

period for so grave a revolution to take place in the meaning of a crucial word like this, especially seeing that the change left no waymarks in the current usages of the people or in the contemporary theological literature of the Church, by which we can trace the progress of the change from the sense of a physical immersion in 1558, to the very different sense of a ritual initiation in 1640. Here is a philological and a theological revolution without parallel for its suddenness. If this new sense of the word started in the middle of the sixteenth century, and came into undisputed acceptance in the Church in scarce more than a single generation, it must have sprung into existence as if by a single leap. But in whatever way this change in the accepted meaning of the word was brought about, the immersionists claim that the change in the meaning of the word, and the misunderstanding which it brings with it, of the critical passages in the

Shall we translate it "immerse?"

Scripture, like the ones before us in this discussion, make it incumbent on all honest translators and all honest exegetes to displace from the English Bible, and from theological literature, the ritual word "*baptize*" (though it is the original word, sanctioned by Christ and the apostles and by fifteen hundred years of Christian history), and to substitute in its stead the non-ritual word "*immerse*," which, they claim, is a modal word of the same meaning as the "modal word baptize," down to the year 1558. Though why of the two classic senses of the word baptize they insist on the word *immerse* rather than the equally well-attested word *submerse* (or overwhelm), it is not easy to comprehend—or is it not easy?

Sectarian assumption.

But this sectarian claim of the immersionists assumes the very question that is in debate; and by this substitution of the word immerse instead of baptize, they unchurch all the rest of the

Christian world. "Immerse" is not the Christian sense of the word *baptize*, and it should not be substituted in the place of it. The word baptize has undergone *one* change in its history, one only, the change before the times of the Maccabees; but not the recent change that the immersionists claim. There has been no change in the meaning of the word baptize in the last two thousand years, and more. The historic fact is, that the only change in the meaning of the word baptize was a change away from the classic sense of a physical immersion into the present non-modal, ritual sense of "initiate." This change is not modern, but is very old. Long before the time of John the Baptist, and of Christ and the apostles, this had already become the accepted sense, ritually, among the Jews; and the word came into the Greek Testament with this ritual sense fully established; and this ritual sense is its only present meaning in ecclesiastical or religious connections.

These statements can easily be verified; and they are in harmony with the entire drift of Scripture testimony and Scripture teaching. The ceremonial, or ritual, use of water for symbolical cleansing, among the Jews, goes back certainly to the time of the Mosaic legislation. Moses commanded that the Jews, when ritually defiled, should "wash their clothes and bathe their bodies in water," to signify that they were made ritually clean. But the usage had probably prevailed long before the time of Moses. The washing of one's person, or of a part of the person, is the natural, the spontaneously-suggested symbol, the world over, to express innocence or moral purity. In exactly this way, Pilate, who was a Roman, and probably knew nothing of any Jewish usage of the kind, adopted this universal symbol, which was as appropriate for a heathen governor as for the Jewish legislator, or for John the Baptist, or for Christ

Harmonizes with Scripture.

himself: "He took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just man." (Matt. xxvii, 24.) In the same way the psalmist says, "I will wash my hands in innocency." The significance of the symbol, as used by Pilate, did not depend on the quantity of the water; and the ceremonial washing required of the Jews was probably not actually of the entire person, and did not imply that the quantity of water must be sufficient for immersion; but it was only representatively or constructively a "washing" of the person, as is shown clearly in other instances. For example, the priest "sprinkled the congregation with clean water," and this was counted constructively as the washing of the whole person, to symbolize the cleansing of the conscience. Besides the daily domestic, non-ritual, washings of unclean hands and persons, to which the Jews were accustomed for cleanliness' sake,

Jewish superstition.

but which were certainly not very profuse, they had also, in later times, "divers baptisms" for the ceremonial purification of "cups and pots, and brazen vessels and divans," the furniture of the dining-room. Much of this ceremonial was a superfluity of superstition, not commanded by Moses, and was only a "following the *traditions* of the elders;" that is to say, of the Pharisees, who overlaid the law with ritual burdens that were too grievous to be borne. Many of these were as absurd as the fantasies of Hindu caste. In this direction the later Jews were scrupulous lest they should defile themselves by "eating with unwashed hands;" and whenever they came from the street they washed themselves. This ceremony was, of course, in their conceit, symbolic, representative of purification of the spirit. But as it was purely a work of supererogation, it was not required to the utmost letter. They compromised on a perfunctory form. This washing did not need

to be done, actually, for the whole body, with tubs of water and soap, and flesh-brushes (in Latin, *strigiles*); but could be done representatively, and was practically confined to the "washing of the hands" (compare 2 Kings iii, 11); perhaps only touching the water, perfunctorily, with the tips of the fingers, as devout Catholics do at the entrance of the church. "For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, if they do not wash their hands up to the wrist, do not eat; and coming from the market-place, if they do not sprinkle themselves, they do not eat."* (Mark vii, 4.) On two occasions Jesus dined

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*This word "*sprinkle*" is the accepted reading here of the latest and best editions of the Greek Testament, and is adopted in the Revised Translation, instead of the word *baptize*. The two Greek words differ in only two letters—"*rantisontai*" and "*baptisontai*." But even if we accept the common text, "they *baptize* themselves," we must still interpet the "*baptism*" as merely a perfunctory and simulative washing: they dipped the ends of their fingers in the bowl, and flipped a few drops over their faces, and were ritually clean! Christ did not approve or practice these superstitious observances of the Pharisees.

with Pharisees; who were punctilious on these matters of their ceremonial; but on neither occasion did Jesus conform to their customs before eating. Once, the host expressed his wonder that Jesus had not "baptized himself before dinner" (Luke xi, 38); though this he could have done if so minded, ritually, by sprinkling a few drops of water on his person. On the other occasion, when also he doubtless had water for the empty ritual observance, but did not avail himself of it, he nevertheless complained that the host "gave him no water for his feet." (Luke vii, 36.) This he needed not for ritual usage, but for physical cleansing from the dust of the street.

It was this daily domestic lavation of the feet that bore so large a part in Asiatic hospitality. Thus Abraham entreated Jehovah, who came disguised as a wayfarer, "Let now a little water be fetched, and wash your feet." (Gen. xviii, 4.) So Lot asked his visitants, "Turn

Domestic washing.

into your servant's house, and wash your feet." (Gen. xix, 2.) So Laban "gave Abraham's servant water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that were with him." (Gen. xxiv, 32.) So Joseph's servant "gave his brethren water, and they washed their feet." (Gen. xliii, 24.) So Jesus "washed the feet of his disciples." (John xiii, 5.) So the typical widow described by Paul "has used hospitality, she has washed the saints' feet." (1 Tim. v, 10.) These were not ritual washings, they did not come under the "divers baptisms" mentioned in the New Testament; but I quote them to show the outside quantity of water that was usually at the command of an Oriental family, for any purpose, domestic or ritual. Certainly the Jews in the wilderness could not have had a sufficient supply of water, or the decent privacy, for literal immersion of their persons: certainly, even after their settlement in Palestine, they could not have literally immersed themselves under the frequent

and unexpected daily emergencies which their law, and especially the later "traditions of the elders," entailed on them. As already noted, Palestine was an ill-watered country; and the daily supplies for household purposes had often to be drawn from deep wells, and carried on women's heads a long distance. It was so that Rebecca (in Mesopotamia) drew water from the well for her flocks, and for Eliezer's camels; it was so that the Samaritan woman came from the distant city to get a pitcher of water from Jacob's well; it was so that probably the mother of Jesus and his sisters drew and carried the water they drank, or used in cooking, or in their ablutions. The six waterpots at the marriage in Cana, which held the store of the household, were a large provision for a single family; and quite probably had been borrowed for the occasion; yet they held at the utmost but twenty-seven gallons each, and neither singly nor in the total could have served for a literal im-

mersion. But they yielded a supply ample for the ritual baptism by sprinkling, and a moderate supply for all the domestic wants of the house.

Baptism was a ritual usage always employed, together with circumcision, for initiating proselytes from heathenism into Judaism. And thus it was naturally and consistently adapted to serve as an initiation of converts into any new faith or reformation. It was a usage whose intent was so well understood that the Jews of John the Baptist's time expected the teacher of a new doctrine to baptize his converts. Thus, when John came baptizing, but denied that he was the Messiah or his forerunner Elijah, and so had apparently nothing new to preach, the Pharisees quite reasonably and cogently asked him, "Why then dost thou baptize?" Christ spoke to Nicodemus in terms that showed that baptism was a well-understood usage: "Except a man be born of water [ceremoni-

Baptism is initiation.

ally initiated by the known sign into the new faith], and of the Spirit, he can not enter into my kingdom." This ritual use of water Christ here assumes as the formal door of initiation; yet we are not to understand that Christ meant that the formal rite was *essential* to membership in his kingdom. Again, when Jesus began to make disciples and to baptize, the Pharisees, angered at this well-known token of a new doctrine, drove him from Judea into Galilee. (John iv, 1.) And when Peter, at Pentecost, called on the multitudes of strangers, all Jews, from all parts of the Roman empire, to repent and be baptized, he took it for granted that all understood baptism as an initiation into a new faith; and none of the three thousand converts that day needed any explanation. Evidently all clearly understood that their change of religious views, in passing from Moses to Christ, was rightly followed by baptism, or initiation into the new faith, by the old and familiar sign,

which was, of course, the Jewish sprinkling. Such was the ritual use of the word among the Jews. The word had already acquired this ceremonial or ritual significance before John and Christ came preaching and baptizing. And they merely adopted the old and familiar Jewish rite; and they adopted the ritual Greek word "baptize," which fitly named it.

Christian baptism solely ritual.

The rite of Christian baptism, then, is clearly defined, not as a mere physical immersion into water, but as a ritual initiation into Christ; that is, into the name or profession of of Christ, by the sacramental use of water as prescribed by Christ. But the particular form or mode of the rite is not prescribed, and is lost sight of, as non-significant in itself. The word *baptism* in the New Testament, and in all Christian religious or ecclesiastical associations, must be explained in accordance with this view. We have seen that, in classic Greek, the word *baptize*

was a modal word, and sometimes meant *immerse;* yet certainly in the Jewish usage before the time of Christ, and even more certainly, if possible, in the New Testament usage, it was no longer a word of mode, signifying literal, physical immersion; but this sense, by long use, had faded out of it, and it had become a word of rite, signifying *initiation*, by whatever mode. This adoption of an old modal word, which was non-religious in its original denotement, and rehabilitation of it into a ritual word for religious or ecclesiastical applications, took place long before Jesus bade his disciples "Go, and baptize [that is *initiate*] all nations into the name [the profession] of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." And in this ritual significance, "*baptism*" as a rite meant, not water or any other element, nor baptistery, or any other place for the performance of the rite; not immersion into water, or any other element, nor yet

Baptism is not water, or place.

pouring or sprinkling; not purification or regeneration, but simply and solely, *initiation*—initiation into Christ; into a profession of faith in Christ's vicarious death. And the mode of the rite is not implied, and is not essential to the full significance of the rite.

The baptismal formula.

In attempting to reach the precise connotation of this word, we must recollect that the sole concept which the immersionists entertain of the rite, is that it is a literal physical immersion into water. But the word *baptize* as used for the New Testament rite, and not merely figuratively, often stands in such connections that all thought of a specific external physical act, like immersion, disappears entirely. Indeed the words of the baptismal formula, both in the Greek and in a correct translation into English, forbid the sense of a physical immersion. The common, though incorrect translation, "Baptize *in* the name," is usually understood in all the

Churches, including the immersionists, as meaning "*by the authority* of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." This translation, with the preposition "*in*," makes a complete and intelligible sentence, and it might, apparently, be the appropriate meaning of the baptismal formula; and the word "baptize" then *might* denote, according to the interpretation of the immersionists, a physical immersion. But the New Testament formula correctly translated is, "Baptize *into* the name [or profession] of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. xxviii, 19); and in this translation immersionism can find no confirmation. But Pedobaptists can consistently accept either of these two translations. With the Authorized they can say, "Baptize [initiate] *in* the name of the Father" (which, though not the New Testament sense of the formula, makes an intelligible sense); and they can also consistently say, with the Revised,

Meaning of the formula.

"Baptize [initiate] *into* the name of the Father." Thus, with either translation, they correctly interpret the verb in the ritual sense of "*initiate*," and the word *name* in the sense of "profession," or "faith:"—"I initiate thee *in* [or *into*] the profession of the Father." And with either preposition, *in* or *into*, the word *initiate* is not a verb of motion, and does not express the act of moving, or putting a candidate into a receptacle, or a baptistery; and the word *name* is not the place *whither*, or *into which*, as a receptacle, or as a baptistery, the initiation brings the candidate. Such is the consistent and intelligible interpretation of the baptismal formula as held by Pedobaptists. But the immersionists who hold that baptism is not a ritual term, but a modal word, and means a physical immersion—the putting of the candidate *into a baptistery* or receptacle—have not this alternative choice between the two translations of the preposition *in* or *into*. In other passages in the

Greek Testament, the word *baptize* is found with the preposition *in;* but in the baptismal formula the preposition is *into*. And if the word baptize expresses only a literal, physical immersion (and is not, as the Pedobaptists claim, a ritual or sacramental term, without mode), the immersionists must consistently translate and explain the formula, "I baptize ['immerse'] thee *into* the name of the Father." But this translation they do not give,* and can not give; because it makes nonsense. They can immerse physically *into water;* but they can not immerse physically *into the name* of the Father. The name (or profession, or faith) of the Trinity is not a receptacle or baptistery, *into which* they can put the candidate.

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*But the "American Bible Union Translation" (a Baptist version, which, aside from its sectarianism, is one of the best in the language) honestly puts the word *into* in the (revised) text of Matt. xxviii, 19, "Immerse *into* the name;" but then, in the margin, it explains this word away, by giving incorrectly the word *unto* as an alternative translation.

And thus they are in a dilemma between the two translations. The necessity of choosing between the two translations brings them into serious embarrassment. They may choose to say, "I immerse *in* the name" (that is, *by the authority*) "of the Father," and thus avoid an absurdity; but it is at the expense of their Greek scholarship; or they may choose to say, "I immerse *into* the name of the Father," and thus save their credit for Greek scholarship, but at the expense of their understanding. Doctor Conant, in his book on "*Baptizein*," quotes a number of passages in the Greek Testament, in which the preposition *in* is used in connection with the verb *baptize*, and he gives the preposition in these passages the correct translation "in;" though he incorrectly translates the verb "*immerse;*" for example, he quotes, "I immerse you in water" (Matt. iii, 11), and "They were all immersed in the river Jordan." (Mark i, 5.) But the crucial passages in which the prepo-

sition *into* is used with the verb *baptize*, he prudently evades altogether, for example: "Baptize *into* the name of the Father." (Matt. xxviii, 19.) "They were baptized *into* the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts viii, 16.) "Were ye baptized *into* the name of Paul?" (1 Cor. i, 13.) As a Greek scholar, he could not translate it, "Immerse *in* the name of the Father;" for this does not express the force of the Greek preposition, and does not convey the meaning of the baptismal formula; and, as a man of understanding, he could not translate it "Immerse [physically] *into the name* of the Father;" for this is nonsense.*

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*Yet in his edition of Matthew, "Translated for the American Bible Union," he intrepidly translated Matt. xxviii, 19, "Immerse *in* the name of the Father;" and actually defended this translation of the preposition as the meaning of the ritual formula. Did he presume on the ignorance of *all* his readers? His bad sectarian warp led him into bad Greek and bad interpretation. The later editors of this translation (as we saw in the last note, p. 61), correct his Greek, but at what a cost to their own candor, and then in the margin they retract this translation!

But the immersionists are not done with their embarrassments over this little preposition *into*. When Paul says, "We were baptized into Christ Jesus; we were baptized into his death" (Rom vi, 3), what do the immersionists make of his meaning? If we translate, and explain, for them, "We were *immersed*, [physically], *into* Christ Jesus," the gross question is instinctively suggested, "Was the body of Christ again pierced—and opened now as a *baptistery*—that we might be physically *immersed into* it? And was his death also regarded as a *baptistery*, of a definite cubic volume, so that we might be physically *immersed into* it?" It is an evasion to reply that the Greek preposition means *unto* instead of *into;* for though this meaning often attaches to the word after verbs of motion towards a point, or of approach, yet the verb baptize ("immerse") is not one of them; and we can not say "Jesus was baptized (immersed)

unto the Jordan."* (Mark i, 8.) But if the preposition be thus translated "Immerse *unto* the name of Christ," the embarrassment of the immersionists is not only not removed, but is greatly increased, to their discomfort and discomfiture. Translating with the word *into*—"*Immerse into* the name"—they are merely guilty of nonsense; but translating with the word *unto*—"Immerse *unto* the name of Christ"—they unconsciously abandon the whole matter in debate, and actually convert immersion into a *ritual act*. The only possible concept of the phrase "immerse *unto* Christ," is clearly that of *consecration unto* Christ: and this, independently of the word immersion, is

*Yet this is probably the true meaning of the preposition in this solitary instance of *this* preposition with a word for the fluid or the baptistery. This construction, called the "pregnant construction," is often found when, besides the first verb, a second verb of motion must be supplied; *e. g.*, "Philip was found [*having come*] *unto* Azotus." (Acts viii, 39.) "Jesus was baptized by John, [having come] *unto* the Jordan."

merely "*initiation into* Christ:" and the word expresses a ritual concept.

"Baptize" means initiate.

But there are passages in which the word baptize has gone yet farther from the literal, classic sense, so that it not only does not mean physical immersion, it does not even make any allusion to the Christian rite or sacrament of baptism; and only in the most general manner has the *non-ritual* sense of *initiation*. This is the only possible, but the simple, explanation of the famous passage in 1 Cor. x, 1: "For I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and they were all *baptized into Moses*, in the cloud and in the sea." The sense forbids any such interpretation as that of literal immersion. There was certainly here no baptismal rite; and there was no one to administer the rite. There was no physical immersion in the sea, or submersion by the cloud, and probably

"Baptized into Moses."

no touch of water at all. To quote from the sublime description of this miracle in the 77th Psalm, "The clouds poured out water," as *intended* to mean that the Israelites were ritually baptized *by sprinkling*, is to descend from the loftiest flight of poetry to the humblest pedestrian prosing. Such an interpretation "sinks from pathos to bathos;" it goes on all fours. The saying means that the Jews, who, in their despair, had lost faith in Moses, now, upon occasion of this great miracle "in the cloud and in the sea," suddenly recovered their faith in him. "When Israel saw that great work which Jehovah did upon the Egyptians, they *believed* [as they had never believed] in Jehovah, *and in his servant Moses.*" (Exod. xiv, 31.) The language of the Corinthians that "they were baptized into Moses" means the same thing as the language in Exodus, that they were now, if never before, *initiated* into Moses, into faith in him as a divine leader.

With this explanation of these words accords also the sense of the passage in 1 Cor. xii, 13: "For in one Spirit, we all [whether Jews or Greeks] were baptized into one body." Here, too, the sense of the passage forbids the translation "*immersed.*" The "body" of the Church is not a baptistery into which believers can be physically immersed. The only interpretation is that all believers (both Jews and Gentiles) were *initiated* into Christ, incorporated into one body, the Church.

In these, and many other places in the New Testament, the literal sense of a physical immersion into water gives us no intelligible meaning. But the ritual sense of the word baptize makes admissible meaning in all the passages in the New Testament where the Christian rite is named. And this meaning is confirmed by the fact that it sometimes happens that several other ritual terms are employed with "baptism," in describing

The word "Immerse" nonsense.

some one incident in which immersion is out of question. For example, just before the ascension, Jesus promised his disciples, "Ye will *be baptized* with [or *in*] *the Holy Spirit*, not many days hence." (Acts i, 5.) A short time after, referring to the same promise, he said, "Ye will receive power when *the Holy Spirit has come* upon you." (Acts i, 8.) This baptism of the Holy Spirit came ten days later, on the day of Pentecost. And Peter explained the miracle of that day, "This is that which has been spoken through the prophet Joel: And it will come to pass in the last days, I will *pour out my Spirit* upon all flesh." (Acts ii, 16.) Now here three different words are used in describing the same act, the one gift of the Holy Spirit. The critic or the theologian who shall look at the passages in their internal relation to each other, will see that it is absolutely indifferent to the sacred historian whether he speak of this gift of the Spirit as a *baptism*, a *coming*, or a *pouring*

out. To him they are but one in meaning, and the conception of immersion is not found in the description.

But though the words baptize, sprinkle, pour, are commutable for the *thought*, it is not correct to believe or claim that they can be exchanged for one another. The word "baptize" can not be *translated* by "sprinkle" or "pour," any more than "sprinkle" can be *translated* by "baptize," or either of them by the word "*immerse.*" Each word has its own specific sense; and though they have a ritual sense in common, the words verbally are absolutely non-interchangeable. It will not do to translate the *word* "baptize" by the *word* "sprinkle" or "pour," as was sometimes done by the old dictionaries, and was maintained by some Pedobaptist sectaries. That is substituting one *modal* word for another *modal* word. Yet both these words can be *explained* as *ritual* terms by the word

"Baptize" not translatable.

But can be explained.

initiate, which is a meaning that they both have in common. The words taken verbally as *modal* words can not be interchanged; but if we fall back on the ritual sense common to them both, either can be used almost as appropriately as the other. This is aptly shown by the instance just quoted, in the promise by Christ, who uses the word "*baptize;*" and in the explanation of the promise by Peter, who uses the word "*pour*" as an exact synonym ritually. The use of water, the symbol of purification, is essential to the baptismal rite; but the volume of water or the mode of application is not essential. The symbol is perfect with *any* application of water, ritually. The symbol is perfect in the quality of the act, not in the quantity of the water. A single crumb of bread, a single sip of wine for sacramental purposes, constitute the material elements of the Lord's Supper, as perfectly as the surfeit in the Church at Corinth. A single drop of water (if necessity so limit the quantity)

sprinkled ritually on the face of a candidate, would answer the end of baptism as perfectly as would all the water of the river Jordan, or the "many waters of Enon." But it is better to hold that, where the rite can not be administered in due form and appropriately, the obligation of the ordinance (which is only a matter of Church order) falls away.

Form not obligatory.

And so, even though it were true (which it is not) that in the beginning Christian baptism was only by immersion, yet this ancient usage ought not to bind the modern Church to this particular mode. *Nothing turns on a form.* The analogy of Christian liberty in other things gives liberty of action here. It was so in the Jewish Church. The law of Moses required specifically that the Jews should eat the passover standing, girded, sandaled. Yet the Jews for three hundred years before Christ ate it lying, in conformity with their later social customs, at meals. Christ him-

self and his apostles ate it so. Did this infraction of the letter vitiate the memorial? The Lord's Supper was first, and for some time, eaten lying, at or after a full meal. The Churches now vary from this custom; and they vary among themselves. The Presbyterians eat it sitting; the Episcopalians, kneeling; the Lutherans, standing. Does this variation from the ancient usage vitiate the ordinance? The gospel is not in letter, but in spirit. We all should follow the example of the apostles, not in outward forms merely, which are nothing, but in the spirit of their life and usages. And yet, while we insist upon the right of Christian liberty in things indifferent, the matter before us is, fortunately for the peace of some troubled souls, not one of the things in which there is occasion for concessions. The Church as a whole has always been, and is, substantially at one on this subject of the *form* of baptism. It is reasonably certain that we now are continuing exactly the

usage of the Jews, of Christ, of the apostles, and of the Christian Church through all the ages.

It is the *initiation* into Christ, symbolized by the ritual use of water, that is of the essence of the ordinance; and that meets all the formal requirements of the Church. The water, the symbol of the inward washing of the Holy Spirit, may be applied in any form, but simplest and best by affusion or sprinkling. This was the form in the Jewish Church; and we now know that it was certainly the form in the apostolic Church. We repeat, that this ritual use of water in this form, to express initiation into a new faith or condition, was well known to the Jews before the Christian era. It was adopted by the Baptist as a usage familiar to his countrymen; and it was adopted and prescribed by Christ himself, as the symbolic initiation into the new faith which he preached. It was an appropriate symbol.

Initiation, the essential thing.

Doubtless any ritual ceremony would have sufficed as an initiation; it would have answered all purposes, so far forth, if Christ had adopted the old Greek initiation into the Eleusinian Mysteries, as an initiation into his Church. But the old Jewish rite was simpler, more beautiful, more easily perpetuated, of universal applicability; and above all, it was suggestive of a glorious moral qualification for his kingdom; it symbolized the washing of regeneration, and it symbolized nothing else. This inward washing was the specific significance of baptism among the Jews: it is the specific and only significance of baptism in the Church of Christ.

Baptist confessions defective.

But such is not the confession of the immersionist Churches. The Baptists do not have in common any standard Confession of Faith; and no confession of any branch of the Baptists within the knowledge of the present writer, declares that baptism symbolizes the

washing of the Holy Spirit; but they all look upon the "believer's baptism" (that is, according to their view, his literal immersion into water) as an emblem (or we might almost say a kindergarten object-lesson) representing to the eye scenically, in the person of the candidate, the literal burial and resurrection of our Lord; but, as some say, suggesting at the same time "the believer's death to sin and resurrection to a new life." But to this general confession of the Baptist Church, Doctor Conant adds, as his own personal belief, that "baptism is *also* a recognition of the pollution of sin and the sanctifying agency of the Spirit as symbolized by the cleansing power of the element of water." This statement of his belief is awkward; but it is evangelical so far as it goes. But in even this meager half-truth Doctor Conant stands alone, without any denominational creed or following behind him. To us his view seems wanting in the essential element

of the sacrament. In his exposition, though he goes beyond his Church, he puts forth, as if it were only incidental and subordinate in the rite, what all the Churches else of Christendom make the one sole significance of the rite—that it is the symbol of the purification of the Holy Spirit. Baptism in water signifies this; it signifies nothing else. To all other Christians, baptism is the sacrament of the Holy Spirit; and it is not the sacrament of the burial and resurrection of Christ. But with their view, the Baptists have two sacraments, to symbolize *two* matters of objective fact in the last moments of Christ (which are however so closely united as to be really but *one*)—the Lord's Supper to represent his death, and the baptism to represent his burial. (Though the Baptists do not administer these sacraments in their chronological sequence.) But they have no sacrament, as have all other Christian denominations, to symbolize the office

Baptism the sacrament of the Holy Spirit.

and work of the Holy Spirit. The grave mistake which the Baptists make in interpreting the sacrament of baptism as a symbol of the Lord's *burial* is the result of their grave mistake as to the mode of administering this sacrament. Baptism is not an immersion; and it is only on this forced interpretation that it can be counted as a symbol of *burial*. Among the Jews it was the inward washing of the Holy Spirit, and nothing else, which the rite of baptism signified and symbolized; and when Christ adopted this rite as the initiatory rite for his own Church, *years before his death* and burial, he could have had no other conception of it in his own mind or his own plans. It was not his own death *and burial*, but the office of the Spirit that he contemplated. It is this inward washing of the Holy Spirit that the rite of baptism as taught in the New Testament signifies and symbolizes; and it does not signify as Chalmers says,

"the burial of the Savior," or as Tillotson says, "the believer's death to sin," or as Beet says, "their spiritual burial and resurrection,"—whatever these things may mean.

PART II.

BURIED.

We come now to consider the word "Buried," in the much-quoted, but garbled, phrases, "Buried with him *by* baptism," and "Buried with him *in* baptism," taken from the apostle's words in the passages before us—Romans vi, 4, and Colossians ii, 12. And we shall then, after our examination of the *word*, be better able to explain the *meaning of the entire phrase*, and its place in the apostle's exposition of the gospel.

Burial is not immersion.

The authorities whom we quoted before, and all who hold with them that Christian baptism is immersion, think that the words "*buried* with him in baptism," not only from the meaning of the word *baptism*, but especially from the mean-

ing of the word *buried*, convey an explicit allusion to *immersion;* and, indeed, that the word *buried* is of itself even a clearer evidence in favor of immersion than the disputed word baptism. But the exegetes who favor this interpretation have fallen into a grave misunderstanding of Paul's words and thoughts, both logically and theologically. They misconceive the subject of his discussion, they misinterpret his words, they misapprehend the connection of his thought. Yet this view, which I am compelled to characterize thus, has warped their interpretation of this passage; and imposed on the apostle's saying a sense and a sentiment that are very far from the apostle's view. It is indeed one of the amazing wonders of theological exegesis, that an interpretation so absolutely baseless as this, so utterly perversive of the apostle's meaning, should have ever gotten acceptance in this world of thinking men and of theological learning, and of evangelical teachings, and should

have so long held almost undisputed possession of men's minds.

Romans teaches our union with Christ.

The passage in Romans vi, 4, of which the words and the meaning have been so seriously mistaken, is the central passage in the Epistle, and in Paul's exposition of "his Gospel." The one simple, cardinal intent of this passage, and of the entire paragraph in which it is found, is to declare the union of believers and of the world at large, *en masse*, with Christ in his sufferings, and death, and burial, and resurrection. This is the sum and substance of the gospel which Paul preached. It is the essential thing; everything else is non-essential. And (as we have seen, page 17), the reference in this verse to the *rite of baptism* into Christ is not a prominent part or feature in the discussion, but is only incidental to it, almost as if it were but the drapery to the stately statue beneath it. The discussion would retain all its signifi-

cance unimpaired, if the *allusion* to baptism were dropped out. It is our "*burial* with Christ"—that is, in full, our union with him on the cross, and in his death, and *in his grave*, and our resurrection with him to a renewal of the right to live—that is the fundamental and sole teaching of the passage; and the reference to the fact that our formal initiation into him was through the rite of baptism into his death is incidental only, and does not involve any of the matters discussed in the verse or in the passage at large. Certainly the infinitesimal question of the *mode* of administering baptism does not lie even on the surface of the glorious declaration, either in the separate words, or in the sentence as a whole. The apostle does not say, or assume, or imply, by sentence, or phrase, or word, or allusion, that "baptism is by immersion;" and to import into the words, or into the declarations of the verse, or of the passage, or of the Epistle, or of the entire New Tes-

tament, any such microscopic issue as this, is to misconceive the subject under discussion, and to misunderstand the words, and to miss the line of thought.

This erroneous interpretation of the immersionists finds its popular support, and the adherence of even their scholars, in the fact that the words as they usually quote them, "buried in baptism," dissevered thus from the rest of the sentence, *seem* to have this meaning. There is, to begin with, a standing vagueness or incertitude in their understanding of the word "buried," when applied to Christ. They sometimes think and speak of Christ's burial as being literally *in the grave*; but they more often think and speak of it as being metaphorically *in water*. Undoubtedly the former, the literal *burial in the grave*, is the apostle's meaning in these passages. But the immersionists juggle with the word about *Christ's* "burial," back and forth from one sense to the other,

"Buried" a vague word.

as it suits their immediate need; yet when they speak of *our* "burial with him," they *always*, inconsistently, use the word in the sense of our "burial" *in water*. In times of revival we often hear from immersionist pulpits the exhortation "to follow Christ in baptism, to come and be buried with Christ"—language which implies that Christ was "buried *in water*" and that we, too, must be buried in water.

But this phrase "buried in baptism," garbled from the apostle's sentence, and constituting their sectarian *catch-word*, does not give us even a glimpse of the apostle's real meaning. Indeed, the phrase thus quoted strangely travesties his meaning. The words are taken from two distinct clauses of the sentence, and are arbitrarily joined together. To get the apostle's meaning, we must take his sentence as he actually wrote it. The fourth verse reads thus: "We were buried with him, through the baptism into his death."

On these words, at the hazard of repetition from page 7, I add a few exegetical notes.

1. The word baptism does not mean water or baptistery; but the ordinance "through" (or "in") which we were ritually initiated into Christ's death.

2. The phrase "into his death" is not construed with the word "buried," so as to read "buried-into-his-death," but with the word "baptism," so as to read, "We were buried with him, through the baptism-into-his-death"—that is, "through our initiation into a profession of faith in his vicarious death."

3. The word "buried" does not mean "immersed" (figuratively, or physically); but it means, literally, "*laid with him in his grave*"—the grave of Joseph of Arimathea, in which Christ's dead body was laid.

Let us restate some of these points.

The word "buried" does not mean "immersed;" nor is it used, as so confidently

asserted by the one party, and so unwarily conceded by some of the other party, "*in allusion* to the mode of baptism as being by immersion." The word "buried" bears no allusion to the *mode* of baptism; and, indeed, it bears no allusion to baptism at all. When Paul said, "We were buried with him, through the baptism into his death," it was furthest from his line of thought to teach, or even to imply, that baptism was by immersion; and the word "buried" did not, in even the most distant way, *suggest* to his readers then, that immersion was the normal mode of baptism. His sole thought was, that we, as members (by birth and by grace) of Christ's body, having died with him on the cross, (constructively, a literal and actual death, in his representative person), were also laid with him, constructively, in the literal and actual tomb in which his dead body was laid. And by our being publicly baptized into him, that is, by our ritual initiation into his vicarious death,

Restatement.

we signified to the world our belief in this literal union with him.

Paul's words in these passages must be taken literally, not figuratively, or mystically.

Our burial literal.

The word "buried" means "laid in the grave," not immersed; and "baptism" means an ecclesiastical ordinance, or rite; not a fluid, or the place, or cubic space, in which a person may be "buried in baptism." It means nothing but the rite, or ordinance, which was instituted by Christ, and which was duly administered to us by his Church, upon our profession of faith. And the prepositions in the passages, "*Through* the baptism into his death" (Rom. vi, 4), and "*In* the baptism" (Col. ii, 12), are to be taken, not instrumentally, but as meaning simply the formal token of our initiation into him; that is, that "*through* (or *in*) virtue of the administration of baptism," we were taken and held as buried, constructively, with his dead body. It was in this ritual reception of baptism on

our part, that our constructive death with Christ, and our burial with him, were sealed and ratified to us, and were proclaimed to the world. Christ's death and burial were historically literal and actual for him; and our death and burial *with him* were equally literal and actual for us; but only constructively so, as yet. There will come a time when they will be actually realized by us also. The text in Romans reads, "We were buried [laid in the grave] with Christ, *through* [through virtue of] the rite of baptism [initiation] into his [vicarious] death;" and the text in Colossians reads, "Ye were buried [laid in the grave] with him *in* [in virtue of] the rite of baptism [initiation into his death.]"

The explanation which teaches that the words "buried with him" mean immersion, totally misses the point. The error is a fundamental one, both in its historical character and in its theological teachings. It perverts the sense of

Burial not Immersion.

the most important doctrinal statement in the New Testament, a statement which teaches, as no other so clearly, so satisfactorily, the vicarious, substitutionary, death, and burial, and resurrection, of the Lord Jesus. This is the teaching of these passages, their plain teaching, their only teaching. They teach that he represented the race; we were ideally included *with him* in all that he did; we were with him in his crucifixion, in his death on the cross, in his burial, in his resurrection, in his glorification.

We repeat and emphasize the saying that Christ's death was a *literal* death, his resurrection a *literal* resurrection. Such is the basis of the gospel scheme. Christ was literally dead, and buried; and all men died with him, and were literally and really buried with him, yet only constructively. Christ literally arose from the grave; and all men literally arose with him, yet only constructively. Such is the accomplishment of the

gospel scheme. Both the burial and the resurrection were literal and real for both parties; historically true for Christ, and constructively so for men. The usual interpretation of a literal physical death, and burial, and resurrection of Christ; but of a figurative, spiritual, mystical, death and resurrection of men, is as inconsequent and incongruous as it is unreasonable and unscriptural. There is no common point of tangency or resemblance. The parallelism between Christ and his members holds only when the words are taken in the same identical sense for both. This is the key to the otherwise incomprehensible declarations of the apostle in this chapter. *As* Christ was buried literally, physically, in the grave; *so* we, his members, were buried with our Head, literally, in his grave; yet of course only constructively. *As* Christ was raised literally, physically, not to die again; *so* we, his members, who died with him, and were

Our death not mystical.

buried with him, arose with him literally, in the same sense in which he arose; not as some fancy, to a regenerate life (for that would not apply to Christ also "*As he—so we*"), but to a constructively reinaugurated life, now made eternally ours through Christ. This personal oneness with Christ is the fiction of the law, the fiction of the Gospel scheme; yet a fiction that is a triumphant truth. This is the only logical, thinkable, tenable, meaning of the Gospel scheme. Any other is a mere fancy, an idle play on the ambiguous, or equivocal, sense of words. To institute any comparison in which the terms are not applicable to both parties, in the *same* sense, is only a meaningless jingle of words, such as the usual interpretation makes out of this passage: "*As* Christ died (*literally, physically*), *so* we died *figuratively, mystically to sin; As* Christ rose *literally, physically; so* we rose *to a spiritual regenerate life.*" There is no resemblance

"As Christ, so we;" literally.

here, except in the fancy of the word-monger. With just as much appropriateness, that is, with none at all, might we run a parallel in our Christian experience with any random incident in Christ's secular life. For example: *As* Christ was *born* of the virgin Mary; *so* we should be *born* of water and Spirit. *As* Christ *wore* a coat without seam; *so* we should *put on* the *whole armor* of righteousness. This is not theology, it is not piety, it is not good sense; it is drivel. But it is not more driveling than the usual interpretation of the fourth and fifth verses of this chapter in Romans.

"Buried through baptism."

But this is not the end of our difficulties with this interpretation. If, according to the immersionist's view, our burial with Christ is not our literal burial in his grave (though only constructively), *through* our initiation into his death; but, as they explain, is our actual physical immersion in water, as an

emblem of Christ's burial; and if the word "baptism" does not mean the rite, or ceremonial, of initiation, but the water used in the rite—why does the apostle in the passage in Romans say, "We were buried *through* the baptism?" Can he have meant, "We were [physically] immersed *through* water?" That is not very intelligible in either Greek or English. Paul usually means something, and usually expresses very clearly just what he means. We should have expected him to say, "We were buried *into* the baptism;" that is (being interpreted in the immersionist sense), "We were immersed with him *in* or *into* the water." But Paul's phrase "buried with him *through* the baptism into his death," if it means something, means just this, that we, for whom he died, *through* (through virtue of) the rite of baptism, the initiatory ordinance appointed by Christ, were joined, conceptually, with Christ in his actual burial in the grave, at Calvary. "We were laid in the grave with him, *through* our

having been initiated into his death, the vicarious atonement for the race." And, further, when in the passage from the Colossians, the apostle actually uses this word "*in*" ("Ye were buried with Christ *in* baptism"), if the word "buried" means immersed, and the word "baptism" means water, we might understand the sentence so far forth in the immersionist sense, "Ye were immersed with him in water;" but when the apostle goes on to say, in the same sentence, "Ye were [physically] RAISED IN the water," we are again puzzled to know what he meant. If (as Tillotson, and Clarke, and Chalmers, and Beet declare) he meant to teach both *immersion in* water and *emersion from* water, why did he not say (as these over-sure exegetes interpret him), "Ye were raised *from* the water?" Clearly he did not mean that; and therefore did not say it. But with the other, the *true* meaning, in his thought, Paul *says*, "Ye were buried with Christ in his grave

[of course conceptually, yet literally], *in* the act of baptism, [that is, *in* virtue of your ritual initiation into his death]; and ye were also, conceptually, *raised* with him [from the *grave*, not from the water], *in* virtue of your observance of this same rite of baptism."

Thus much for the explanation of these weighty words of the apostle. We must take them in their literal sense, not as a figure, or a fancy. We were buried with Christ, where Christ was buried; not in the water, but in the tomb of Joseph. We were buried with him, through our initiation into his death. And thus these central passages set forth Christ's death as vicarious, and declare our union with him in all the points that belonged to his atoning work: we were nailed to the cross with him, we died with him, we were buried with him, we rose with him, we were glorified with him. All these things were

Literal, not figurative.

historically actual *to him*, by virtue of his consecration to this redemptive work; and they were equally actual *to us*, though as yet only constructively so, by virtue of the gospel plan, which holds all men as his members. For all men this is a glorious fact, not a fancy or a figure of speech. It is the fact for all men; though only constructively so, as yet; a legal and evangelical fiction, which holds good provisionally, to be realized by us in the great future. In this great and certain future, the legal fiction which now makes us sharers constructively in Christ's death, and resurrection, and glorification, will become a tremendous and glorious reality. Conceptually we died with Christ, and were buried with Christ, and arose with Christ; but in the great and consummate day of the Lord Christ, we shall arise from the grave where his body once lay, arise as he arose, actually and physically, and live

with him in our resurrection body forever.*

The baptism or ritual initiation into Christ, did not effect our oneness with him. There was nothing sacramentarian or magical in character, in the act of baptism, to make us sharers with Christ. Baptism simply betokened what was already ours. We were baptized, not in order that we might become members of Christ's body, and sharers in his death and burial, and in his resurrection, but because we were already members, and already shared in all these things. And the baptism, which was only the ritual sign and seal of our profession, not only signified this, but declared to

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*How strikingly is all this union with Christ expressed by the apostle in another passage: "I have been crucified [put to death on the cross] with Christ. But it is no longer I that live [in my now dead Adam's self], but it is Christ that lives in me [in my now Christ-self.] And the life [new lease of existence], which I now live in the flesh [in the body], I live by my faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself [to die] for [instead of] me." (Gal. ii, 20.)

the world, in formal and public way, that we personally assented to this great truth of our oneness with Christ, and accepted him as our Redeemer.

But there is another lesson for us in these passages in Romans and Colossians, more valuable far than that of their significance ritually;—the lesson of their momentous significance doctrinally. These passages are rich, almost beyond any others in the Bible, in their evangelical teaching and implications. The gospel teaches that all men belong to Christ, by virtue of their creation: "All things have been created through him, and unto him . . . who is the head of the body, the Church." And it teaches that all men, by virtue of his universal atonement, were joined with him, potentially and actually, in his vicarious death and burial. All men died with him on the cross; and, as sharers in his literal death, were laid with him in his literal grave. It is true, not all men yet

Not only ritual, but evangelical.

know this, or confess it; but now, in these passages, and most fully in the passage in Romans, the apostle declares that at least *we*, the professed believers in Christ, who consciously recognized him, accepted this great fact as our own. "Through" and "in" our ritual initiation into his death, we formally and publicly announced our faith in all this. We actually and literally shared in our own persons (constructively) what Christ as our substitute experienced in his own person. He died, and was buried, and rose again. We died and were buried with him, as we declared through our being baptized into his death. We were buried with him in his grave; and as he literally arose from the dead, never to die again, so we literally arose with him (constructively, but not figuratively, and not mystically), reinvested with the eternal life, *the right to be*, which we forfeited in Adam. United with him in the sameness with his death and burial, we were united with him in the

sameness with his resurrection. But what Paul here declares true for *us*, the avowed believers in Christ (of whom alone he is now specifically speaking), holds good also equally for *all* men, whether avowed believers or not. Paul does not perhaps, verbally include other men, here, in the terms of this sentence, but he is far from excluding them, in fact, from the ample provisions of the gospel. Christ's atoning and saving work compassed the entire race, every individual of the race. And this wideness of the gospel is the great characteristic of Paul's teaching. "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ will *all* be made to live." "In him we live, and move, and are."

This explanation of these passages, quite apart from the vapid, mechanical, exegesis usually given them, is nevertheless, the very inmost marrow and soul of the gospel. It is found in these passages; and nothing else is found here. It is in perfect accord with all the

This, the only explanation.

teachings of the Scripture. We shared with Christ, *all* of us, in all that he did for us. We must stretch out the apostle's words to their utmost limit, to reach the limit of his concept. This concept takes in *all* the world. Observe the expressive construction of the sentence. The language is retrospective, the assertion of one historical fact, that is true for *all* men equally: "We *were* buried with him." To this historical fact we all look back. We *look back* to our death with Christ, and to our burial with Christ, as a thing that is past—past certainly for all of us who believed in him, and were formally baptized into him, but past in the same sense equally for all the race. Neither the literal baptism (which is only outward and symbolic, but not vital or essential), nor yet even our personal vital faith in Christ, constitutes our title to a share in his vicarious death, and burial, and resurrection. Our *right* to a participation in these, lies further back than baptism and faith—lies in

our oneness with Christ, the oneness of *all* men with him; and our baptism and faith only point our way to this gracious and rightful franchise. Christ's death, which was substitutionary or representative, was, in itself, without any volition on our part, potentially the death of all mankind. The race, and every individual of the race, past, present, and to come, was present ideally in Christ's representative person, and shared with him, constructively, in his literal death. All men died with Christ, and were buried with him, and arose with him, whether believers or unbelievers, whether baptized or unbaptized. The emphasis here comes on the words "*with him.*" In Paul's concept of the gospel scheme, these words express our personal union, the union of *all* men, with Christ in his death, and burial, and resurrection, and glorification. Was Christ nailed to the cross? Paul says, "We were nailed to the cross [crucified] *with him.*" Did he die?

"With him."

Paul says, "We died *with him.*" Was he buried (in the tomb of Joseph)? Paul says, "We were buried *with him.*" Was he raised from the dead? Paul says, "We were raised *with him.*" Was he glorified? Paul says, "We were glorified *with him.*" And all these results came by virtue of our racial oneness with him. They came by no volition of our own, or by our own seeking, but as the normal working out of God's plan for the redemption and the salvation of men.

All these assertions, and many more of the same tenor, are found in the apostle's teaching: and they all point in one direction, that of our union with Christ. We all belong to him: "We are Christ's, and Christ is God's." The New Testament attests the unconditional universality of the atonement of Christ, and the unconditional salvability of every man in Christ. Listen: "By the grace of God, he tasted death for [instead of] *every* man." (Heb. ii, 9.) "If one

All point to our union with Christ.

died for [instead of] *all*, then *all* died [constructively with him]." (2 Cor. v, 14.) "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ will *all* be made to live." (1 Cor. xv, 22.) This is the large ideal of the gospel, for time and for eternity. It works ever and everywhere on these magnificent lines. But Paul, in the majestic sweep of his faith in Christ, counts it as already all accomplished: "We *were* crucified with him; we *died* with him; we *were laid* in the grave with him; we *were raised* with him; we *were justified* with him; we *were glorified* with him." Paul declares that Christ's redemptive work was co-extensive with the ruin of the fall, and even exceeded it: "Where sin abounded, grace overabounded." No man born of Adam is born without an equal share in this redemption of the race. And we repeat that every man, good and bad, believer and unbeliever, baptized and unbaptized, was the purchase of Christ's death, the sharer of his burial, the sharer of his resurrection life. We may

boldly and safely challenge and claim every man, everywhere, in Christian and in heathen lands alike, as belonging already to Christ. The penal consequences of Adam's sin were abolished in Christ for the race. And none will fail of the glorious reality, but those who deliberately refuse eternal life. But when death and the grave shall give up their dead, there will yet remain for any who, of set purpose, rejected Christ, the penal consequences, not of their heredity from Adam, but of their own deliberate personal sin. The eternal future for every man turns on his own personal will. Christ said to the Jews who rejected him, "Ye *will* not come to me [ye *refuse* to come] that ye may have life." (John v, 40.) For such is reserved "the second death."

The explanation here presented of these passages, is the only one that is tenable either for the Greek original, or for the English translation; and it is the only explanation which accords with the constant tenor

of the New Testament teachings. If the exegesis here given of these passages, and of the teaching of the New Testament at large, is true, then the notion that there is here a teaching of immersion or the most distant allusion to it, in the word "buried," falls away utterly, finally. It is clear misapprehension of the meaning that leads any advocate of immersion to quote these passages from the apostle as the Scripture basis for his views, or to quote any of the authorities named on page 13, as yielding any support to the immersionist interpretation.

And now, if the conclusion which we have reached in the foregoing discussion is valid, we are prepared to express the exact thought of these passages in more explicit form, beyond the possibility of doubt and of debate, and almost beyond the assault of cavil. Romans vi, 3–5: "Do ye not know that we, who were initiated into Christ Jesus, were initiated into [a participation in] his [vicarious] death? We were laid in the

grave, therefore, with him, through the initiation into his death; that just as Christ was raised from the dead [brought to life again], through the glory [*power*, (2 Cor. xiii, 4)] of the Father, so also we may walk [continue our career] in a renewed grant of life. For if we have become united with him in the sameness with his death, we shall be united with him in the sameness also with his resurrection."

Col. ii, 8–12: "Beware lest any [Judaizer] rob you [of your faith in Christ], . . . because in him [not in Moses] ye are complete [needing nothing from Jewish circumcision], in whom also ye were circumcised [initiated] with circumcision not made with hand [that is, not *physical*], with the circumcision of Christ [in the heart], having been laid in the grave with him, in virtue of your initiation [into him]; in which, also, ye were raised with him [brought to life again], through faith."

Christ prescribed two sacraments as the

perpetual and sufficient anchorage and safeguards of his visible Church; and they were both worthy of the Founder and of the purpose that they serve. One, the baptism, the initiatory rite, the symbol of the inward washing of the Holy Spirit, is the public sign of our profession of faith in Christ, and, to the believer's own consciousness, is the seal of the justification which comes from faith. The other, the Lord's Supper, the broken bread and the cup of wine, is also the sign of our profession of faith in the atonement of Christ; and it is the symbol which declares the Lord's sacrificial death, until his coming again.

* UR-597-071 *